- 482 licences granted by the State for trading and storage of minerals have been suspended/cancelled.
- State Level Enforcement squad is conducting intensive inspection of non grant areas to check for illegal mining.
- The Mines Department in the State has begun verification of the mining lease boundaries, for which remote sensing technology is also proposed to be used.
- Four Committees have been constituted at State level for setting up integrated check gates, Revenue Intelligence, Study rationalization of weigh-bridges, and Study to deploy IT application in mineral administration.
- Filling up vacant post in the Mines Department of the State Government to enhance enforcement.

The State Government has further reported on 24.11.2009 in this matter that:-

- Vigilance enquiries have been converted into investigation by registering an FIR under various sections of law.
- As on date, investigation is under progress in 7 cases and as estimated by vigilance, total estimated loss of revenue to the State exchequre is Rs.526.13 crore.
- The investigation is continuing and due action will be taken based on final findings. The State Level Enforcement Squad (SLES) which undertook intensive enforcement from 10th to 19th October, 09 conducted raids on different areas and during one such raid, the SLES members were attacked by illegal operators.
- Orissa Government has noticed that mafias are operating across the State borders of Orissa and Jharkhand states and in order to check illegal mining activities, matter has been taken up at senior level drawing attention to illegal inter-state mining operations and suggesting that a common platform should be set up so that team of officers from both the States can plan and work together.
- Between 10.11.2009 and 19.11.2009, the State Government has seized 4 vehicles, 19513 metric tonne of iron ore, 158 metric tonne of manganese ore valued at Rs.2.27 crore.

The situation is being closely monitored by the Central Government for ensuring strict action against the guilty.

Allocation of iron ore mines in Jharkhand

1934. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether recently some cases of misuse of power in allocation of mineral resources have been noticed by Government in case of iron ore allotment pertaining to Jharkhand;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what steps Government is contemplating to ensure that the process of allocation of mines is completely transparent and only eligible applicants are allotted such scarce resources?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (c) Reports of this nature have recently come to the notice of the Ministry of Mines. However, specific details thereof have not come to the notice of the Ministry. The State Governments are the owner of the minerals located within their respective boundaries. They grant the mineral concessions [Reconnaissance Permit (RP), Prospecting Licence (PL) and Mining Lease (ML)] under the provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) (MMDR) Act, 1957. Prior approval of the Central Government is required under Section 5 (1) of the Act for grant of RP, Pl and ML in respect of the minerals specified in Parts 'B' and 'C' of the First Schedule to the Act. Subsequent to the prior approval of the Central Government, mining leases etc. are executed by the State Governments with the mining agencies after they obtain all statutory clearances and approvals.

The Ministry of Mines is conscious of the need to have a transparent and efficient system for processing the mineral concession cases. In pursuance of the National Mineral Policy, 2008, which *inter alia* enunciates adoption of quick and transparent procedures for grant of mineral concessions, the Ministry has taken several steps in this direction, as mentioned below:

(i) A Central Coordination-cum-Empowered Committee has been constituted in the Ministry of Mines to monitor and minimize delays in grant of approvals for mineral concessions. The Committee consists of the Central Ministries/Departments concerned and the Secretaries in charge of Mining and Geology in the States. The first meeting of the Committee was held in the Ministry on 24.7.2009. The second meeting of the Committee is scheduled to be held on 22.12.2009.

(ii) The State Governments have been advised to similarly constitute Coordination Committees at the State level.

(iii) The Ministry of Mines is using the internet services to bring about more accessibility and transparency in processing the mineral concession proposals recommended by the State Governments. The website of the Ministry *(www.mines.nic.in)* provides all information on the current status of the applications for mineral concessions. These services are being further enhanced to track the process from approval for grant to execution of concession agreement.

(iv) The Ministry has, in consultation with the State Governments, issued detailed guidelines on 24.6.2009 in order to bring more clarity in processing the mineral concession proposals.

(v) The Ministry has framed a Model State Mineral Policy and circulated it to all State Governments on 12.10.2009 with the request to finalise and adopt a Mineral Policy as per their priority and requirements.

(vi) Procedures for revision under Section 30 of the MMDR Act, 1957 are being streamlined to reduce delays in disposal of revision applications.

(vii) All instances of corruption and illegal practices coming to notice are taken up with State Governments with utmost seriousness and followed up.

Hoda Committee recommendations

1935. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that amended Mines and Mineral (Development and Regulations) (MMDR) Act is in contravention of the recommendations of Hoda Committee;

(b) if so, the details of the contraventions, specifically for setting up of the Empowered Committee; and

(c) what is the status of implementation of the recommendations made by Hoda Committee for constituting the Empowered Committee comprising representatives from various Ministries/industries?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 has not been amended recently. It was last amended in 1999.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Based on the recommendations of the Hoda Committee, Government have announced the new National Mineral Policy, 2008. Separately, a Coordination-cum-Empowered Committee has been constituted in the Central Government on 4.3.2009 which includes representatives from Ministries of Mines, Environment and Forest, Defence, Home Affairs, Steel, Directorate General of Civil Aviation, Indian Bureau of Mines and Geological Survey of India. The first meeting of the Committee was held on 24.7.2009.

Corruption in allotment of mining rights

1936. SHRI R.C. SINGH: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that rampant corruption in allotting mining rights/licences for mining in mineral fields has come to light recently involving politicians; and

(b) if so, the details of steps proposed to be taken to make allotments of mining rights transparent and corruption free?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) and (b) Reports of this nature have recently come to the notice of the Ministry of Mines.